

and may still smart under his chastening Dispensations, we may assure ourselves, from the Tokens of his Love manifested in the Work of this GLORIOUS Day, that if we will turn to him, and to our Duty, he will *turn from his fierce Anger, that we perish not*; will in due Time grant us the Request of our Lips, and once more make *Our Jerusalem* a Praise in the Earth.

F I N I S.



John Warr House

88-5-11-12

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the Honourable

HOUSE of COMMONS,

AT

St. MARGARET's WESTMINSTER,

ON

MONDAY, *May* 29, 1732.

June 29^o Die Maii 1732.

ORDERED,

T*hat the Thanks of this House be given to the Reverend Doctor William George, for the Sermon by him preached before this House, this Morning, at St. Margaret's Westminster; And that he be desired to print the same; And that Mr. Wyndham, and Mr. Edward Walpole do acquaint him therewith.*



N. HARDINGE.

Cl. Dom. Com.

A

694. f. 5.
14

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the Honourable

HOUSE of COMMONS,

A T

St. *MARGARET's WESTMINSTER,*

O N

M O N D A Y, *May 29, 1732.*

By *WILLIAM GEORGE*, D. D.
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. TONSON in the *Strand.*

M DCC XXXII.

MEMORIAL

Presented to the House of Commons

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SEMPER PARATUR WESTMINSTER



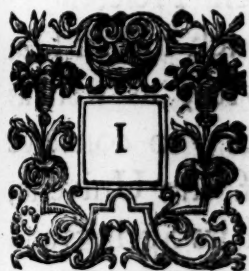
Monday, May 10, 1782.

By WILLIAM GEORGE D.D.
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

LONDON:
Printed for J. Tonson in the Strand.
MDCCLXXXII.

P S A L M xcvii. 1.

*The Lord reigneth, let the Earth rejoice:
let the Multitude of Isles be glad
thereof.*



IT is a Doctrine taught us by natural Reason, and confirm'd by Observation and Experience; as well as inculcated in Scripture, and illustrated by numberless Instances there recorded for our Instruction and Admonition; that as God created the World *by the Word of his Power*, so He directs and governs it by his Wisdom and Providence. Although, when *the Heavens and the Earth were finished, and all the Host of them*, it is said, that *He rested from all his Work which he had made*; it is not meant thereby, that he gave over working, and resign'd himself up to a State of Indolence and Inaction; but only that the Work of *Creation* was finish'd, and the System of the Universe so adjusted and dispos'd,

B that

Gen. ii. 1.

Gen. ii. 2.

A SERMON preach'd before the

that Things, without more than his ordinary Concurrence, would go on, according to that stated and establish'd Order, which *we* call the Course of *Nature*: By which we mean, that Method according to which the *Author* of *Nature* chooses to display his Wisdom and Power in the Conduct and OEconomy of the World. It does by no means derogate from the Happiness of his Nature, to suppose him thus constantly employ'd in preserving and conducting the Works of his own Hands; nor from the Perfection of those Works, that they want his constant Influence for their Preservation and Direction: And it gives us a much nobler Idea of the Supreme Being; a more awful, as well as more amiable Sense of his Attributes; to conceive Him always present to every Part of the Universe, and always active in it; adjusting all its Springs and Movements, and guiding its Operations, or controlling and suspending them; preserving that wonderful Regularity amidst almost infinite Variety, or on extraordinary Occasions, in a more amazing manner, deviating from it--- This Notion, I say, gives us a much more exalted Conception of God, than to imagine Him, as some, miscall'd Philosophers, have done, wrapt up in the Contemplation of his own Happiness, regardless of that of all other Beings; leaving the World to the Guidance of Chance, too uncertain to be depended on, or
of

of Fate, too certain to be alter'd. Thus, when the Sun *rejoiceth, as a Giant, to run his appointed Course,* and *knoweth his going down,* he *declares the Glory of God*; and he made the same Declaration, though in a more astonishing manner, when he once *stood* Josh. x. 13. *still by the same Appointment.*

But though the senseless and unintelligent Parts of the Creation are equally the Objects of God's Power; it is the rational Part only that are the Subjects of his Government and Laws. It is over Moral and Free Agents that *the Lord*, properly speaking, *reigneth*; who obey out of Understanding and Choice, not Necessity and Constraint: who are capable of apprehending the Reasonableness and Fitness of their Obedience; and can be influenc'd by a Sense of Duty and Gratitude to Him, of whose Power they are the Creatures, and on whose Providence they are Dependents. *The Heavens*, and every thing in the material World, *declare the Glory of God*, but are insensible of it themselves: But the Subjects of his moral Kingdom glorify him most effectually, when they pay him that Obedience, through Choice, which it is in their Choice to refuse.

In this Sense the People of the *Jews* were most peculiarly and eminently the Subjects of God's

A SERMON preach'd before the

Kingdom. Among them *the Lord reign'd*, when there was no other King in Israel; giving them *Statutes and Judgments*, of which the Heathen had no Knowledge, and interposing sensibly in the Execution of them. Yet neither did he leave himself without *Witness* even among the *Gentiles*, in that he did them good, and gave them *Rain from Heaven*, and fruitful *Seasons*, filling their *Hearts* with Food and Gladness. But to us Christians, who have receiv'd the *Kingdom of God*, that is, the *Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ*, is his Sovereignty still more gloriously manifested: and yet more particularly, *We* of this Church and Nation, who have been so often rescu'd by God from the most imminent Dangers with a mighty Hand and with a stretcht-out Arm, have the greatest Reason to acknowledge that *the most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men*; and to say with the Psalmist in the Text, *The Lord reigneth, let the Earth rejoice; let the Multitude of Isles be glad thereof!*

The Application of which Words to our own Case is sufficiently determin'd by the particular Occasion of this Day's Solemnity. In compliance therefore with the Design of it, give me leave to lay before you,

First,

Honourable House of Commons.

5

First, The Reason we have for Rejoicing on this Day.

Secondly, The Manner in which we should express our Joy.

If then private and personal Blessings claim the Tribute of Gratitude and Thanksgiving at our Hands; If public and national Ones, which are the Foundation of the other, forasmuch as the Happiness of every Individual is inseparable from that of the Community, demand the same Returns in a still more forcible Manner; how much stronger is the Obligation, when a People is deliver'd from a State of Tumult, Disorder, and Confusion, and restor'd to their just Rights and Liberties, under that Form of Government, which the Experience of Ages, and particularly of that in which it was destroy'd, has shewn to be the only one under which it can flourish! A Constitution, in which the Prince has all the Power that is consistent with the Liberty of the People; and the People all the Liberty that is not incompatible with the Ends of Government: And where Laws, to which both have consented, are the common Measure of the Authority of the One, and the Obedience of the Other. It is the *Glorious Prerogative* of the King of Great-Britain, that he governs a *Brave and Free People*, who pay to their Prince, as they do, in a higher

A SERMON preach'd before the

higher Degree, to their *God, a reasonable Service*; not the tame abject Submission of *Slaves and Cowards*. And it is as glorious a Privilege of the People, that they acknowledge no absolute Power, but that which is conducted by infinite Wisdom, Goodness, and Justice; *rendring unto Caesar the things which are, by Right, Caesar's; and to God, and him only, the things which are God's.*

'Tis true, that, in the Times immediately preceding the Calamities we were this Day deliver'd from, the Boundaries of Prerogative and Privilege were not so exactly set out and ascertain'd, as they have been since; or, at least, were not so well understood. Hence those mutual Jealousies, Misunderstandings, and Provocations, those Sparks of Contention, which were afterwards blown up into a devouring Flame, that laid waste all before it. It is as true, that there were illegal Burthens laid on the Backs of the Subjects, unwarrantable Acts of Power exerted, and real Grievances that call'd for Redress. But might not the Excrecences of Power have been prun'd off, without destroying *Root and Branch*? Was it necessary that the Constitution should be torn in pieces, in order to be mended? Or could not the Breaches in the Church have been repair'd, without pulling it down? Must it, to be reformed, be made an *Abomination of Desolation*?

And

And must the Land, to be cleans'd, be made *drunk with Blood*; not excepting even that of Sacred and Anointed Majesty? Yes. Thus it pleas'd God to suffer a Sinful People to *fill up the Measure* of their own *Punishment*, as they had of their *Iniquity*. Thus he permitted *their own Wickedness to correct them*, Jer. ii. 19. *and their Backslidings to reprove them*. For what, I pray, were all their Victories, but so many Triumphs over themselves? They who had shook off the Authority of their lawful King, were forc'd to submit to the more severe and inglorious Yoke of a base and sordid Tyrant; who treated the *Great* and sacred *Charter* of their Liberties with much more Scorn and Contempt, than the most aspiring of our Princes ever presum'd to do. After so many Changes from Bad to Worse, from one Scene of Extravagance and Confusion to another, they had nothing left, but to curse in the Bitterness of their Hearts, the unhappy Success of their own Fatal Valour; and to lament the Loss of those Liberties, for which they had fought, and conquer'd.

As for the State of Religion in those Times of Reformation, take an Account of it in the Words of those who had labour'd most zealously for purer Ordinances: * “ Instead of an Establishment, say

* See a Testimony to the Truth of Jesus Christ, &c. subscribed by the Ministers of Christ within the Province of London, Dec. 14. 1647.

they,

A SERMON preach'd before the

“ they, of Faith and Truth, we swarm with noi-
 “ some Errors, Heresies, and Blasphemies: Instead
 “ of Unity and Uniformity in Religion, we are
 “ torn in pieces with destructive Schisms, Separations,
 “ Divisions, and Subdivisions: Instead of
 “ true Piety, and the Power of Godliness, we have
 “ opened the very Flood-gates to all Impiety and
 “ Prophaneness: Instead of submitting to the Government
 “ of Christ, we walk in a Christless Looseness
 “ and Licentiousness: Instead of a Reformation,
 “ we may say with Sighs, what our Enemies
 “ heretofore said of us with Scorn, we have a De-
 “ formation in Religion.

From these complicated Calamities did the Lord deliver this afflicted Nation, when *the Time was come that he should have mercy on Sion.* And great as the Deliverance was in it self, it was made more valuable by the Manner in which it was effected. Had the King return'd to his Inheritance by Force of Arms; besides the Effusion of so much Blood, which the Nation could but ill spare, after it had been exhausted of so much already, in the Course of a long Civil War; he might have treated us as a conquer'd Kingdom; and his *Restoration*, however Glorious and Triumphant to himself, would have been Matter of small Joy to us; to whom, as he would have ow'd no Thanks, so he might have shewn no
 Favour

Favour. Nay further, as, in that Case, he must have been assisted by the *Popish Powers*, from * whom he had Reason given him to hope for it, we might have lost our Spiritual, as well as Civil Liberties, and have been brought again under that Yoke, which neither we, nor our Fathers could bear. But it pleas'd God to give us this great Deliverance unmixt and intire; when he bow'd the Hearts of all the ^{2 Sam. xix.} People, even as the Heart of one Man, so that they ^{14.} sent this Word unto the King, Return thou and all thy Servants. So that the Prophetical Blessing of Moses on the Royal Tribe of Judah, may seem to have descended on him and us. Hear, Lord, the Voice of ^{Deut. xxxiii.} Judah, and bring him unto his People: let his Hands, ^{7.} his own Hands, and those of his Subjects, be sufficient for him, and be thou an Help to him from his Enemies!

But how great soever this Blessing was, both in it self, and the Manner and Circumstances of it; it is still more so on account of its Author. It was the Lord's doing, and therefore it is marvellous in our Eyes. However it might seem to be brought about by the casual coïncidence of second Causes, yet all those Causes were doubtless conducted and guided to that end by the first and supreme One. It was he only, who could make the dividing and clashing In-

* Lord Clarendon, Vol. III. p. 679. Octavo Edition.

A SERMON *preach'd before the*

terests of so many Sects and Parties; the Hopes and the Fears; the Wisdom, and the Folly of so many Instruments all combine and unite to accomplish this wonderful Event. For the People's Hearts, as well

Prov. xxi. 1. *as the King's, are in the Hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of Water; he turneth them whithersoever he will.* It

Isa. i. 26. *was He that restor'd our Judges as at the first, and our Counsellors as at the beginning; and who still does, and will continue 'em to us, while we acknow-*

Isa. 51. 5. *ledge His Mercy with Gratitude and Thankfulness: for his righteousness is near, the isles shall wait upon him, and on his arm shall they trust.*

Let all those therefore who are duly sensible of the Blessing of a happy and envied Constitution, restor'd, *as on this Day*, to our Fathers, after a long and sad Experience of the Want of it; and by them transmitted to us, who never underwent that Loss; *rejoice and be exceeding glad.* It is a criminal Stupidity to have no Relish of Happiness; and they do not deserve God's Blessings, who are insensible under them. The Passion of Joy was implanted in us, as all the others were, for good and wise Purposes, by the Author of our Nature, who has likewise created Objects suitable to it, and particularly commanded us to be *joyful in the day of prosperity.* Only we should take heed, that it be duly regulated, and express'd in a proper manner. Which was

Ecclef. 7. 14. *The*

The Second Thing I propos'd to speak to.

The First and best way of expressing our Joy on this Occasion, is by returning Thanks to God for it, which I trust we have all now sincerely done. Gratitude is a Principle so strongly impress'd on our Nature, that we scarcely account him a *Man* who is without it. It operates almost involuntarily; and the tender Affection in a manner prevents the Direction of Reason and Choice. It overflows immediately on the Sense of an Obligation; especially when the Benefit is unmerited, and when we are incapable of making any other Return for it. Now this is our Case with respect to God: We are *unworthy of the least of his Mercies*, and unable to repay them in any way, but that of Praise and Thanksgiving. And shall we grudge him this small Return for all his Favours; when he adds to the Obligation, by accepting the humble Tribute? Surely this Duty, which we pay out of Instinct, as well as Principle, needs no inculcating: And I would willingly hope, for my own sake, that the Preacher, who recommends it, *on this Day*, may pass uncensur'd. It has been often observ'd, That it is a difficult thing for him to discharge his Duty, on another solemn Anniversary, without giving Offence; which he ought, if possible, to avoid. It has been made

A SERMON preach'd before the

a Question, whether we are oblig'd to humble our selves before God, and deprecate his Judgments, for the Sins of our Forefathers: But surely it can be no Question, whether we should return Thanks to him for the Restoration of our ancient and invaluable Form of Government in Church and State; the Benefits of which we enjoy'd, in the amplest manner, under his late Majesty, of *Glorious Memory*, whose Nativity was the Forerunner of this Day; and which we still are blest'd with, under the happy Administration of our present most *Gracious Sovereign*. And we hope our latest Posterity will partake of the same Blessings under his illustrious Descendents; that *the People which shall be born may praise the Lord.*

Which suggests a Second Consideration to the same purpose, viz. That we do not rejoice as we ought to do, on this Day, unless we pay to those whom God's Providence has set over us, all that Gratitude and Affection which the Blessings they dispense to us claim; and all that Duty and Obedience which the Laws of God and Man require. How far their Authority extends, is to be learnt from the particular Constitution of each Community: But when that is known from thence, the Law of God enjoins Submission to it, in every thing not sinful, for *Conscience sake*. The Gospel was

was not intended to teach us new Systems of Politics. It no where tells us who the Higher Powers are in any Government; but secures the Public Tranquillity in all, by commanding Obedience to the Powers that be, as *ordain'd of God*, in virtue of a higher Obligation. Beyond this, *we* have no Commission to dictate: and it is neither prudent nor decent, for *us* to take upon ourselves to determine the exact Bounds of Liberty and Authority. In a *legal and free* Government, such as, blessed be God! we now enjoy, to speak of Cases wherein Opposition is lawful, is, at least, unnecessary: and in a *violent and arbitrary one*, such as we were delivered from by another *Glorious Revolution*, such Cases will speak for themselves.

Let us conclude the Devotion of this Day with our Prayers to Almighty God, that he would bless our Gracious Sovereign in every Circumstance both of his Public and Private Relation; particularly, in his going out, and safe coming in to his People: That He would pour down a *double Portion of his Spirit* of Wisdom and Understanding on the Queen; that she may administer Judgment and Justice to this great Nation in his Absence, and meet with suitable Returns of Duty and Affection from it: And make them both happy in
each